

Amendment to the Disability Employment Act:

- the Act covers private and federal public employment;
- the Act protects against discrimination with regard to establishing work relations, pay, training and retraining, career advancement, terminating work relations, membership in work organizations, and access to self-employment.

Most of the rules are similar to the Disability Equality Act:

- Reasonable accommodation or removal of barriers is required from the employer unless this would be a disproportionate burden.

Amendment to the Federal Disability Act:

- A Disability Ombudsman is established within the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs to support persons with disabilities who feel discriminated.

Amendment to the Constitution:

- The Austrian Sign Language is recognized as an own language.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Gender mainstreaming is still quite a new issue within Lithuanian society as well as amongst the responsible institutions. Some key issues in the theory and practice of gender mainstreaming are discussed in the paper. The paper suggests that gender mainstreaming is underdeveloped as a concept, and identifies a need to elaborate further on some fundamentals. In particular, the conceptualization of mainstreaming needs to be re-thought with special attention devoted to the understanding of problems of gender inequality that underlies it, and the articulation of the relationship between gender mainstreaming and societal change.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES VIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

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Equal opportunities for a person, community or nation can not be ensured without involvement, participation and empowerment. These terms are also closely related to social work and imply basic competences of a social worker. In 2007, a European Leonardo da Vinci project “Community Care Approach: A Strategy for Social Inclusion” lead by Debreccen university (Hungary) has been started. It incorporates 8 countries (Sweden, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Lithuania, Belgium, Romania, and Bulgaria) and is aimed at curriculum development in the field of Community social work for educating field practice teachers of social higher education programs. Community-oriented social work recently has become more popular in many EU countries. Communities in all the countries, while implementing one of their main functions, i.e. rallying and empowering local people, at the same time ensure equal possibilities in all areas of social life: by solving the problems of excluded groups, providing services and activities, which respond to the needs of all diverse groups. These functions correspond to the policy of the European Union: to motivate incorporation of equal opportunities into the Community policies.